

ACP releases paper on methods for managing conflicts of interests in clinical guidelines

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A rigorous process for the disclosure of interests (DOI) and management of conflicts of interest (COI) is essential for developing high-quality clinical guidelines and guidance statements, the American College of Physicians (ACP) says in a new [paper](#) published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

"ACP's comprehensive process for [disclosure](#) of interests and management of conflicts of interest is designed to be transparent, proportionate, and consistent," said ACP President Robert M. McLean, MD, FACP. "The goals of our process are to mitigate any actual bias during the development of ACP's clinical recommendations and to ensure credibility and [public trust](#) in our clinical policies by reducing the potential for perceived bias."

Any individual involved in the development of ACP's clinical guidelines and [guidance](#) statements must disclose all financial and intellectual interests related to health care from the last three years. Individuals submit disclosures at the start of participation and are required to update their disclosures over the course of their involvement with the Clinical Guidelines Committee, which develops ACP's clinical policy papers.

A DOI-COI Review and Management Panel reviews the disclosures, flags potential sources of COI, grades the COI as "low," "moderate," or "high," and manages the individual's participation accordingly. High-

level COI results in recusal from authorship, voting, and all committee discussions. Moderate-level COI results in a recusal from authorship and voting for clinically relevant topics, but permission to participate in all discussions. Low-level COI results in no role restrictions. All disclosures and COI management decisions are available publicly.

ACP recently published "[The Development of Clinical Guidelines and Guidance Statements by the Clinical Guidelines Committee of the American College of Physicians](#)" that presents ACP's methods for developing clinical guidelines and guidance statements.

More information: Amir Qaseem et al. Disclosure of Interests and Management of Conflicts of Interest in Clinical Guidelines and Guidance Statements: Methods From the Clinical Guidelines Committee of the American College of Physicians, *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2019). [DOI: 10.7326/M18-3279](#)

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